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BRITISH COLUMBIA.

VISIT TO THE LYTTON INDIAN MISSION.

OU will have received my last paper. I there gave you an encouraging story of the Church's work in two of our country districts in the neighbourhood of Victoria. I will now ask your readers to accompany me across the Gulf of Georgia and up the mighty Fraser to Lytton, where we shall find one of the most remarkable Missions known to our Church. I may here observe that my testimony with respect to this Mission is the more valuable in that I went to Lytton fearing that the work of the Rev. J. B. Good had been over-estimated.

It was a bright morning early in September when, with the Bishop, I embarked at six o'clock on board the *Enterprise* for New Westminster, the chief city of the mainland of this vast colony. The scene as we left the snug harbour of Victoria was beautiful beyond description. Before us was the smiling sea, backed by the sierrad mountains of Washington territory; and as we skirted our own picturesque shore, or threaded our way among lovely islets, memory went back to scenes I had so often revelled in while steaming over the blue Mediterranean. The air, while warm, was somewhat crisp, rendering life quite enjoyable. About one o'clock we entered the Fraser, whose yellow waters discolour the sea for miles, and landed on the wharf at New Westminster at four o'clock. Much was changed—I may say, greatly improved. Many old friends were there, but, oh! how altered in look! My habit is to fancy that all grow old save myself, but then I was compelled to say, if I am as altered in appearance as they are, surely my looks must tell well of sixty summers. There is ever something very hearty in the welcome from a Churchman when a brother returns to a colony, and especially so here, for the link of Church-fellowship on this coast, where the battle between Christ and the world ever rages, is peculiarly strong. How thorough were the grips and how bright the smiles of old friends! Alas! some were not there. I sadly missed Arthur Bushby, who had from the first been a noble example of holy life. He has gone to his rest. I also longed for the devoted rector, John Sheepshanks, who helped, and that right well, to lay the foundations of the Church in British Columbia. Thank God, that brave servant of Christ is still doing his Master's work in the old country! His labours in the colony will never be forgotten, for he kept many faithful to God. Archdeacon Woods and his son received us gladly, and soon we were welcomed by the whole family to their hospitable home. Long was the evening's talk, Church matters of course being warmly discussed. Our stay was brief, indeed, for early next morning we were again working our way

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up the rapid Fraser. Hard is the struggle, as the stream runs three or four miles an hour, and our progress was further stopped by constant calls to deliver or take in cargo. Towards evening we reached a landing a few miles below Hope, and there tied up for the night. An early start next morning brought us to Yale, the head of navigation, about eight o'clock. Steaming up a vast river, the banks on either side one continuous forest, while to the novice interesting, to the old settler is dull and dreary; but when the Cascade range is reached the bends of the Fraser present noble and ever-varying views which never tire—the mountains so lofty, so close, and so grand. Yale lies on a flat of a few acres surrounded by dark mountains. The Fraser, rushing through a narrow cañon, forbids all further advance of steamers. The most daring Indian cannot venture his canoe into the foaming, dashing waters. I shall have to speak of the Church and Indian Mission at Yale on our return from Lytton.

We had now a land journey of fifty-seven miles, presenting scenery not surpassed, scarcely equalled, in Switzerland. The road is cut out of the mountain side, and runs along the Fraser, at times literally hanging over the boiling waters, which lash and rage some 800 feet beneath. The course of the river is through a rending of the mountains, which rise on either side from 2,000 to 3,000 feet, the distance from wall to wall being often not more than a quarter of a mile. The gigantic rocks are plutonic, metamorphic, and trappean, permeated throughout by a system of metalliferous quartzose veins and trappean dykes. We reached Boston Bar as evening was setting in, and slept there, leaving thirty-two miles for the next day's travel. How changed was our bed and board from what we had formerly experienced! In early days I always slept on the ground in the midst of miners, wrapped in my two stout blankets, a saddle for my pillow; the fare plentiful, but rough. Now there is as comfortable a bed as Christendom can provide and the best of provender.

After a sumptuous breakfast we were again ready for our move at an early hour. The horses were pawing, and the driver seated, when an Indian beckoned the Bishop aside to tell him how sorry he was that he could not be at the Mission gathering; he was attached to a pack train, and could not possibly leave his work. He then added, with much warmth, "Nika tumtum hyas kloosh, Bishop, hyas skookum sakkalee Tyhee" ("My heart is very good to you, Bishop, and very strong towards God").

"That man," said the Bishop, "came to me once, and took me away into the bush to an old Indian woman, who, on her deathbed, was longing for baptism. I baptized her, and it was quite delightful to see how happy my visit had made the old creature." The day was fine, the air invigorating, and the horses proud and strong, so we had

a delightful drive over the lofty Jackass mountain, down which we were carried at a tremendous pace. On the rocks we observed broad red marks, indicating the height to which the Fraser rose last year. It may seem incredible, but it rose 100 feet. That will give some idea of the narrow gorges through which it runs. We stopped at a camp of surveyors engaged in laying out the Dominion Pacific Railway line, and had luncheon. They had just finished work for the season, and looked wiry and worn.

We were now only a few miles from Lytton, and soon were we made sure of that fact, for in the distance appeared a horseman clad in white. He was a vedette on the look-out for the Bishop. No sooner did he catch sight of our carriage than off he galloped to give the signal. This man had on his arm a band, and on it a red cross, signifying that he was an officer of the Mission—a watchman. Soon the road was crowded by a cavalcade of Indians, men and women, many most picturesquely dressed, the colours those delicate greens and violets and blues so much the delight of Mohammedans. As we approached they drew up in line and greeted us with a cheer which made the mountains echo again, and when we had passed they formed a body of outriders such as few monarchs have ever seen—the ladies generally deeming side-saddles unworthy their equestrian powers. Two or three had side-saddles, and with their green veils and riding habits looked like intruders. The nearer we drew to the Mission the more numerous became our escort, till at last there must have been at least 200.

A sight of Mr. Good, surrounded by anxious inquirers, now told us that our work would soon begin. He gave us a most hearty reception, and conducted us to two tents pitched on the brow of a hill—one large for the Bishop, a smaller one for myself. No time was lost; an open-air service at once commenced. The chiefs were gathered together near to the tents on the right hand, and below them their men; the women were on the left, all forming a charming picture. Nothing could exceed their decent bearing, all so quiet and attentive and devout. The prayers were in the Thompson language, spoken by Mr. Good with great fluency. The Indians delight in intoning and singing. They have sweet voices, and all joined most heartily in the prayers and hymns. The prayers finished, the Bishop addressed a body of earnest listeners. Mr. Good first interpreted, and then a catechist named Nalee, a native Christian of high worth, proclaimed what was said to the congregation. It was a moving sight to see the subdued faces expressive of deep inward reverence, all so calm and devout. I was now introduced as the Bishop's friend, and one who had gone forth into great battles—a patriot and a warrior. That seemed to move my hearers powerfully towards me. Possibly some deemed me the hero of a hundred fights, while to the mass I must

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have seemed a mystery, a mingling of priest and general. How they understand my military career signifies not, but this much is certain, they listened earnestly to my feeble words. There is no mistaking the look that tells of a stirred heart, and, further, it is the custom of the Indian to utter words of thankfulness and approval as the preacher tenderly pleads with him. Many were the grateful cries as we exhorted these children of God to holiness, and at the close of our simple sermonettes there went forth quaint cheers of joy and gladness.

The next to speak was Spintlum, head chief of the Thompson tribe, which numbers more than 2,000 souls. In language of great excitement he warned all against a life of sin. He impressed on them not to talk about the sins of others, but rather to search their own hearts and scourge themselves. He illustrated his subject by an allusion to himself. "You sometimes see me (he said) playing a game of cards (here he acted as if dealing out the cards), and you exclaim, 'How wicked is our chief!' It would be far better if, instead of attacking me, you would mend your own ways; and remember, I know you all, some of you need to lead better lives than you do," &c., &c. After a few words from Mr. Good, the evening hymn was sung and the blessing given. The Bishop then advanced, and all shook hands with us and bade us "Good night."

To understand how real are these Indians, it must be remembered that they are not taken away from the world and trained day by day in a pattern village, but they live in the midst of white men, trade with and work for white men, and are scattered over a large area, some coming more than fifty miles for these services. They readily sacrifice time and money, and undergo no small fatigue and exposure in order that they may worship with the Bishop and receive his blessing. Not a penny is given them. They make a sacrifice at great cost, because they love Christ.

Our labours began early on the Saturday as we had a hard day before us, all the candidates for confirmation and baptism having to be carefully examined. The weather was boisterous, so we had to assemble in the church. As we approached the Mission, men were seen riding round and calling aloud, and on the upper step of the church-porch stood one of the faithful, bidding all to come up to the house of prayer. These were "*watchmen*." The head of the tribe is the "*chief*." Under him are "*captains*," or inferior chiefs, who act as his adjutants and take counsel with him on all matters of importance. There are also church officers called "*watchmen*," who know all who are Christians, watch and advise them, and when necessary warn them. They keep the Mission well informed as to the conduct of the baptized and the catechumens, and also bring to him inquirers. The discipline, while severe, is most necessary, as any approach to

laxity would soon create want of confidence among the truly devout. Catechumens, as a rule, are kept under instruction and observation from four to five years, and any flagrant falling away is heavily punished. During our stay one poor fellow, anxious to be confirmed, came to the Bishop and humbly sought re-admission to Church privileges. He had in a time of sickness fallen into heathenism and sought the sorcerer to help his son. His cry was, "For eighteen months I have been kept from God's house. I deeply repent of my sin. May I not again come to church? May I not be confirmed?" He was, I am happy to say, pardoned, examined, and confirmed, and most serious was his bearing. Another marked characteristic of Mr. Good's Mission is the close attention paid to Church order. The prayers are always from the Prayer-book, the Word of God is regularly read, a portion of a Psalm or of the Gospel of the day is explained, and the hymns are translations from those with which in the old country all are familiar. The Liturgy in the Thompson tongue is nearly ready for the press.

As soon as the watchmen had gathered together a crowded congregation—men on one side, women on the other—morning prayers began. An exposition of a verse from the Psalms was given by Mr. Good, and then followed a touching address from the Bishop, who said much to encourage and not a little to warn, the redeeming love of Jesus ever taking a prominent place in his sermon. Next came the examination of those who sought confirmation. The face of each candidate was a sermon, so full was it of serious thought and lowly faith. It must never be forgotten that these Christian Indians were only a few years ago depraved heathen, given up to gambling, drinking, murder, and lust. They cannot read—no, not a letter. What they know and what they do, all is from the long teaching and holy example of Mr. Good. So nothing more than a simple child-like trust in Christ can be expected from them. That they have this faith and a desire to live holy lives will be seen in the following answers given to questions put by the Bishop or myself. I can only offer you a few out of many.

Tahimkin, Chief of Spapian Indians, baptized last year.—"I want to be confirmed that my soul may be saved. My heart is firmly set for God. I pray before I eat my food; I pray before I go to sleep. I think God hears me, because He has sent His Son to die for me. With the help of God, I will lead a good life."

Elias Naakaist.—"I am poor and old, and I run to Christ to be saved. My prayer is, 'Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.' I am poor in heart, but Christ is my strength."

George Soye. This is a handsome chief with much character about him.—"Indians are weak. I am weak, but I desire to go higher, to

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take another step that by the help of Christ I may reach my heavenly Father. My prayer is that my heart may rest with God."

Abner Skutanetsah.—"I want to be saved. I pray daily to God. Christ hears me, I know, because He died on the cross to bring men to saving truth."

Gilbert Quonleetsah.—"I come poor and weak to confirmation that I may be strong in Jesus. I pray that God may be with me, that His Holy Spirit may never be grieved by me."

Matthias Pahakutta.—"I have been waiting for Bishop, longing to be confirmed. I pray to the Holy Trinity to help me. I am as the dust of the earth before God, but the Word came to teach me and die for me, and I hope, by the means offered by His Church, to go heavenward."

Tooniak. His house was once the den of gamblers, he himself the desperate leader of the gang.—"The grace of Christ and the blood of Christ—they are my desire—they alone can do me good. I join with my chief in prayer. I feel that I can never fail if I look to God for help."

It was close work examining from early in the morning till half-past one, when we retired for refreshment. At 2.30 came the female candidates. I wish I could place before your readers the whole of their answers, they would gratify many an earnest heart. As my space is limited I will select two or three.

Dorcas Shuktulko. Her husband was confirmed with her.—"I am sorry that I was not confirmed long ago. I will, by the help of God, lead a good life. When I cannot get to church I will pray in my house. I will hold tight to God."

Marian Shumsheetka.—"I come to be confirmed because I seek life. I strongly believe in God and say, 'Have mercy upon me, O God.' Christ, I believe, came to die for me and show me my way to heaven."

Mary Sheakonuck.—"I pray for help from above. I look to my Saviour. I am very sorry for my many sins, and hope Jesus Christ will help me, through His Church. When temptations come I will fight against them." She came with her baby.

Agnes Zaglenak.—"By coming to confirmation I shall find more of God. Christ will there come to me and do my soul good. I always pray to the Holy Trinity to help me. When I am in trouble I ask God to make me patient."

The examination of fifty-seven for confirmation and twenty-two for baptism occupied a long time. The Indian deliberates carefully before speaking, and great patience is necessary. By allowing time for thought we always secured a sensible answer. Throughout the many hours not the smallest approach to lightness could be dis-

covered—no careless smiling, no talking ; one and all felt the solemnity of the occasion. None were more impressed than the Bishop and myself. I may truly say that the conduct of these devoted servants of Christ made me feel intensely my own unworthiness.

As evening began to set in the Bishop exhorted all present to remember that time for preparing is short—that many had gone to their rest since last he was there—that Christ was still calling for sinners to come to Him. He bade them pray for the guidance of God's Holy Spirit to sustain the earnest and to convert the wicked. A short evening service followed, with hearty singing, in which all joined with a right goodwill. The Bishop then gave the blessing, and we retired for food and rest after a long but very happy day.

I will endeavour by an early mail to send you particulars of our further work at Lytton, and what took place on our Mission visit to Yale and Hope. Were I to put all my story into one paper it would be too long for your truly useful monthly, which I hope is being more and more valued. Allow me to say just one thing. This Mission sadly wants help. The house for Mr. Good is only half built, and the church is sadly out of repair. We require at least £200 to put all in order. Would that some of your well-to-do readers could see the poor room in which the Missionary lives, and journey with him one of his long wearying rounds of some 200 miles and more, then would they gladly uphold this self-denying servant of God, who never murmurs, but truly rejoices to suffer in behalf of these faithful converts. I earnestly entreat those who can to give freely in aid of this holy and highly blessed work. You, I know, will gladly receive donations, and so also will the Rev. Herbert Rowsell, 17, Westbourne Villas, Harrow Road, W., the Secretary of the Columbia Mission. "Friends, in the name of Christ, I ask you to help us."

H. P. WRIGHT,
*Archdeacon of Vancouver's Island, and Chaplain
to the Forces, First Class.*

VICTORIA, Sept. 28th, 1877.
